PUERTA LA CRUZ
WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY
P 07-004 Environmental Log: 07-04-001

LINTON ROAD, PUERTA LA CRUZ AREA
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

BIOLOGICAL LETTER REPORT

APN: 136-160-41

UTM (NAD 83): 11-S: 529,185mE; 3,685,110mN

Prepared for:
County of San Diego

Project Proponent:
Mr. John Barker
Vista Towers, LLC
10161 Broadview Place
Tustin, CA 92705
Telephone: (605) 703-7217
Facsimile: (806) 398-8901

Prepared by:
Pacific Southwest Biological Services, Inc.
Post Office Box 985
National City, CA 91951-0985
Telephone: (619) 477-5333
Facsimile: (619) 477-5380
E-mail: bio@psbs.com

PSBS #U891

19 May 2008

R. Mitchel Beauchamp, M. Sc., President

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Summary

Pacific Southwest Biological Services, Inc., (Pacific Southwest) conducted a general biological assessment, including habitat assessments for the Quino Checkerspot Butterfly (QCB) (*Euphydryas editha quino*) and Stephen's Kangaroo Rat (SKR) (*Dipodomys stephensi*), on the site located south of Linton Road in the Puerta La Cruz area of northern San Diego County, California. The proposed project is a major use permit for an unmanned telecommunications facility (see below).

The biological assessment identified two vegetation communities within the study area: Riversidean Sage Scrub and Non-native Grassland. However, two Engelmann Oaks (*Quercus engelmannii*) and two Scrub Oaks (*Quercus berberidifolia*) occur near the proposed project improvements. The proposed project building pad would be less than 25 feet from one adjacent Engelmann Oak and two Scrub Oaks, and may directly impact these individual trees, which are not part of a woodland (see discussion, below). One sensitive animal, the Western Bluebird (*Sialia mexicana*), was detected during the assessments. The property does not include any jurisdictional wetlands. Implementation of the proposed project would directly impact 0.37 acre of Riversidean Sage Scrub. These impacts are considered significant under CEQA for the reasons discussed in the section below, Significance of Project Impacts and Proposed Mitigation.

Because the site contains trees that could be used by nesting migratory birds protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code, impacts could occur to such species if unsupervised construction on the site takes place between 15 February and 31 August (for raptors, this period in the County is 15 January through 15 July). Impacts to potentially nesting migratory birds are considered significant under CEQA but would be reduced to a less than significant level if the proposed mitigation measure is made a condition of project approval and implemented prior to the identified impacts.

Introduction, Project Description, Location and Setting

Pacific Southwest, at the request of Mr. John Barker of Vista Towers, LLC, conducted a general biological assessment, including habitat assessments for the QCB and SKR, on the proposed Puerta la Cruz Wireless Communications Facility site in northern San Diego County, California. This report summarizes the current biological conditions of the property, the results of the assessments, and an analysis of on-site impacts from the proposed project. This report provides the project applicant, Vista Towers, LLC, the County of San Diego, resource agencies, and the public with a biological assessment of the project site and likely project impacts to satisfy the review of the project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Prior to the assessments, Pacific Southwest searched the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) for the USGS 7.5' Warner Springs, California quadrangle. This search revealed several federally and state-listed species, or County sensitive species, that may occur in the vicinity of the property. Pacific Southwest reviewed a recent aerial photograph (via Google Earth-2006; date unknown) for potential drainage patterns and vegetation type boundaries. Also reviewed was a soil survey map (Bowman 1973) of the project site and vicinity for soil types, including hydric soils. The underlying rock formation was determined from a geology map (Rogers 1965).

Biologist Claude G. Edwards conducted the survey 24 July 2007 between 1000 and 1300 hours. At the start of the survey the skies were clear, winds were light from the west, and the ambient temperature was approximately 90°F. At its conclusion the skies were partly cloudy, winds were gusty from the south, and the ambient temperature was approximately 103°F. Botanist R. Mitchel Beauchamp visited the site 27 December 2006.

Methods for the general biological assessment consisted of walking slowly along both sides of the narrow dirt power line access road, proceeding south from Old Chaney Ranch Road to the project site, noting the terrain and vegetation and watching and listening for wildlife. Binoculars (8x32) were used to assist in the detection and identification of wildlife. Species presence was confirmed by visual observation and/or auditory detection, tracks, scat, bones, dens and burrows. Vegetation communities were mapped. Species of plants and wildlife were recorded in the field.

Methods for the QCB habitat assessment followed survey protocol requirements (Service 2002). Conditions of the terrain and vegetation in the survey area were noted in reference to the potential for Quino occurrence.

Methods for the SKR habitat assessment focused on habitat requirements described in the species' recovery plan (Service 1997).

The project site is located northwest of the unincorporated community of Warner ~~Hot~~ Springs, San Diego County, California (Figures 1 and 2). The area surveyed is situated on un-sectioned lands of the San Jose del Valle Spanish Land Grant, USGS 7.5' Warner Springs, California quadrangle (UTM [NAD 83]: 11-S: 518,630mE; 3,711,733mN).

The proposed site is on a small east/west trending ridge at approximately 3,100 feet above mean sea level. The terrain on and around the site is occasionally grazed by cattle, as allowed by the Vista Irrigation District, although none were observed during the survey. The ridge lies among small hills at the northeast end of the broad valley containing Lake Henshaw. Soils for the project area are mapped as Bull Trail sandy loam on eroded slopes of 9-15 % (Bowman 1973). Geologic strata are mapped as Pleistocene nonmarine (Rogers 1965).

The proposed project is a major use permit for an unmanned telecommunications facility. The project consists of the installation of one 11-foot-6 inch by 16-foot by 10-foot pre-cast concrete equipment shelter, within a 61-foot by 36-foot fenced area leased from the Vista Irrigation District, a 60-foot cellular tower designed as a faux pine tree, a "monopine," with a total of 12 antennas within three antenna arrays of four antennas each. The project would

enclose two wall-mounted Bard Air Conditioning units, the Model WH/WA 602 Packaged Terminal Air Conditioners; an emergency generator, model Generic SD030 Diesel Generator mounted on a 5-foot by 10-foot concrete pad immediately west of the pre-cast equipment shelter, and 4-foot by 8-foot concrete stoop located adjacent west of the cabinet.

The staging of supplies and trucks for the construction of the site would be confined to the newly bladed access route and the footprint of the proposed equipment/lease area site. The topography of the site limits any other nearby staging area and as such, the construction schedule and processes will be designed in a way that the site is built from back (east) to front (west). No vehicles or heavy equipment would be left overnight in the staging areas. It is possible that some equipment or vehicles may be temporarily (same day) staged at the bottom of the hill at Old Chaney Ranch Road, which is already disturbed ground.

Access to the site would be provided from SR 79 via an existing 20-foot-wide paved private driveway (Linton Road), then an existing 12-foot wide dirt road (Old Chaney Ranch Road), and then a proposed 10-foot wide side track to the top of the ridge, where the planned facility would be placed. Just north of the crown of the ridge, the project access route varies from the existing dirt road in order to stay under the maximum road grade requirements of the County; a new track, along the western crown of the ridge, would be approximately 425 feet long and 10 feet wide. The portion of the existing dirt road to be abandoned is approximately 275 feet long and 10 feet wide. The applicant intends to use a blade on the existing dirt road and remove any rutted areas; this action would only impact the top few inches of the existing road and would not extend the longitudinal limits of the existing road. The circumvented portion of the existing site access would be left to grow back to the adjacent grassland condition.

After construction, the project would involve approximately one vehicle trip per month for routine maintenance of the facility. Access to the site would be provided by a driveway that follows most of the existing power line access road. No extension of sewer or water facilities will be required by the project. The project would include minor earthwork for facility installation consisting of nine cubic yards of cut and 18 cubic yards of fill material. The project includes the following off-site improvements: a road approximately 12 feet wide and 1,200 feet in length between Old Chaney Ranch Road and the project lease area.

Habitats/Vegetation Communities

The survey identified two vegetation / habitat types within and adjacent to the project site: Riversidean Sage Scrub and Non-native Grassland (Figure 3). The vegetation occurring within 100 feet of the project footprint is discussed below, with appropriate Holland (1986) element codes. Because the project would be placed on a very large parcel, the existing extents of the vegetation categories are not calculated, although the project impacts are calculated and discussed below. Cattle grazing has had a pervasive disturbing effect on the site, resulting in a substantially high incidence of non-native grasses and forbs as well as a general structural degradation of the shrub lands.

<u>Riversidean Sage Scrub</u> (32700)

Riversidean Sage Scrub (RSS) occurs on the higher and steeper terrain and slopes on and around the site. It is characterized by low to medium shrubs growing one to two feet tall, dominated by Broom Matchweed (*Gutierrezia californica*) and California Buckwheat

(*Eriogonum fasciculatum* var. *poliofolium*), along with Cane Cholla (*Cylindropuntia californica* var. *parkeri*) and Desert Prickly Pear (*Opuntia phaeacantha*) cactus occurring primarily on south- and west-facing slopes. Areas supporting RSS are sparse and open, generally with few annual grasses and weedy herbaceous plants; the precise boundary between sage scrub and grassland was difficult to determine in the field, but was based on the density of shrubs. RSS is present on the south, west, and north slopes of the project ridge, and also on mid-level terrain to the north on both sides of the dirt power line access road.

Non-native Grassland (42200)

Non-native Grassland (NNG) is the dominant plant community primarily on the lower and more gently sloped terrain, forming a complete cover over the terrain. There are no unvegetated areas of ground, except the power line access road and numerous patches of bare dirt mounds associated with gopher burrows. There are no rock outcrops present. NNG consists primarily of exotic annual grasses including oats (*Avena* sp.) and bromes (*Bromus* spp.) intermixed with clumps of native needlegrass (*Nassella* sp.). The NNG was overwhelmingly dry and dormant during the survey.

A small number of weedy herbaceous plants are present throughout, such as Telegraph Weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*), Short-pod Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), and Dove Weed (*Croton* [*Eremocarpus*] *setigerus*). Native plants such as Broom Matchweed, Sand-Aster (*Corethrogyne* [*Lessingia*] *filaginifolia*), Southern Mule's Ears (*Wyethia ovata*) and a small prostrate spurge (*Chamaesyce* sp.) are also present. Several clumps of Calabazilla (*Cucurbita foetidissima*) are a contrast to the rest of this vegetation because of their robust green foliage and blooming flowers.

An open grouping of several trees and shrubs are located immediately adjacent to the site: two Engelmann Oaks (*Quercus engelmannii*), two large Scrub Oaks (*Quercus berberidifolia*), and several Red Shanks (*Adenostoma sparsifolium*), are situated within one hundred feet. The presence of these plants does not constitute a separate plant community, but they are generally considered as components of chaparral and oak woodland, examples of which are present on nearby terrain.

Special Status Species and Habitats

Thirty-four plant taxa were recorded during the biological assessment survey, of which eight species (24%) are non-native (Appendix 1). All of the plant species recorded during the assessment are considered common and widespread in the inland foothills of San Diego County, except for the one sensitive species observed, Engelmann Oak, which exists as isolated individual trees.

Ten wildlife species were recorded during the survey: these consisted of five invertebrate species, three birds, and two mammals (Appendix 2).

The CNDDB search revealed federal- or state-listed species known from the general project area. Appendix 3 lists these species, their conservation status, their typical habitat requirements, and potential for occurrence on the property.

The CNNDB search revealed federal- or state-listed animal species known from the 7.5' Warner Springs, California topographic quadrangle that may occur within the study area. The County scoping letter included additional species that may also occur. Appendix 4 lists these species, their conservation status, their typical habitat requirements, and potential for occurrence in the study area. One sensitive animal species, the Western Bluebird, was observed; this species is a common resident in San Diego County's foothills and mountains (Unitt 2004). No sensitive plant species were recorded on or around the site, except for Engelmann Oak, which would not be impacted by the project.

Field habitat assessments were performed for the QCB. The habitat assessment for QCB and SKR consisted of thoroughly checking the terrain and vegetation along the existing power line alignment, and outward 100 feet on either side, as well as on and around the ridge-top and project-associated slopes, to determine if appropriate conditions for both species were present.

Based on the assessments, existing conditions on and adjacent to the site were deemed to inappropriate to support QCB due to the lack of clay soil lenses and associated openings that support its primary larval host plants, Dwarf Plantain (*Plantago erecta*) or Woolly Plantain (*Plantago patagonica*). Although none were specifically identified, a variety of potential adult nectar sources are expected to be present when conditions are more favorable. The site is situated within the species' Critical Habitat area, but the nearest location of confirmed presence is Aguanga, near the San Diego / Riverside County line.

The field assessment revealed no potential SKR burrows or any other conditions indicating their presence. The grassland vegetation consisted of a complete cover. The only un-vegetated areas of ground were along the dirt power line access road and dirt mounds associated with gopher burrows. There were no open burrows with droppings at their entrance, a diagnostic detail of SKR occurrence. In addition, no dirt runways or dust-bathing sites were found which suggest their presence. As a result of these observations, the project area is not considered appropriate for the occurrence of SKR. The vicinity of the site is considered to be within this species' range, extending south from interior Riverside County.

Foraging Raptors

The Warner Valley grasslands are a known raptor foraging area, with the largest variety of species and numbers of individuals occurring primarily during migration and in the winter months. Raptor species such as the White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*), Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*), Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*), Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) and Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) have been recorded in the region. Any of these species could potentially use the site for foraging for reptiles, small birds or mammals, although there are no special habitats (such as riparian habitats) that would particularly attract raptors.

- The finished project would be constructed in an area covering approximately 2,379 square feet, and make it unavailable for future raptor foraging; the loss of this area to foraging raptors in less than significant because of the small size of the impact versus the large area available for raptors in the Warner Valley grasslands, amounting to several

thousand acres. Since the project is an unmanned cell tower, with only monthly maintenance checks, impacts on raptors would be negligible.

Large Mammal Use

The proposed project is situated in an area that supports a limited variety of large native mammals, or even medium-sized mammals. These may include Black-tailed Jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), California Ground Squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), Coyote (*Canis latrans*), Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), Mountain Lion (*Felis concolor*), and Mule Deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*).

- Since the project is an unmanned cell tower, with only monthly maintenance checks, impacts on large or medium-sized mammals would be negligible and not significant.

The Non-native Grassland present on the lower and more gentle slopes form a complete cover over the ground and no unvegetated patches were observed except the dirt power line access road and the bare dirt mounds associated with Botta's Pocket Gopher (*Thomomys bottae*). None of the dirt mounds, or other possible rodent burrows that were found, exhibited the distinctive characteristics indicative of SKR burrows. The SKR is unlikely to occur on the site.

- Thus, the site does not contain any special status species, although the native shrubs and oak trees could serve as nesting sites for birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code.

Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waterways

The proposed tower site is on a small ridge and does not contain any wetlands or jurisdictional waters; however, the proposed access road crosses a non-jurisdictional drainage at an existing road crossing.

- The project would not impact any jurisdictional wetlands or waterways. The feature is a non-jurisdictional swale. The blue-line designation that appears on the USGS 7.5' Warner Springs, California quadrangle is unrelated to jurisdictional criteria. The USGS plots blue-line streams if they appear on an aerial photograph. This is not a criterion indicative of state or U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction. The swale is not a County Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) wetlands either. It is part of the Non-native Grassland habitat that has been disturbed by an existing roadway of the Vista Irrigation District, the landowner. Blading it is part of the normal road maintenance that would be done by the landowner or San Diego Gas & Electric when accessing their facilities. There are no sensitive resources in this lower portion of the project site.

Other Unique Biological Features/Resources

The project site includes Riversidean Sage Scrub and Non-native Grassland, both considered sensitive habitats for the reasons described above. During the blooming period, flowers of the plants of these communities may be attractive to butterflies.

Local and Regional Wildlife Movement Areas

Wildlife movement in the vicinity of the proposed project is influenced in part by existing terrain of low ridges and intervening lower ground oriented roughly east-to-west. The terrain ascends slightly to the east and is generally more extensively covered with dense shrubs and

clumps of oak trees. Another topographic feature that contributes to wildlife movement is a seasonal drainage to the west, adjacent to State Route 79, draining north-to-south. The drainage supports more wooded vegetation than nearby areas. Another factor influencing wildlife movement is a network of dirt roads and trails associated with the Vista Irrigation District and power line access roads. These traverse varied terrain and vegetation. In general, because of the low, rolling hills and heavily grazed habitats, neither the site nor the immediately surrounding area are likely to be used for local or regional wildlife movement.

- Wildlife movement through the area would not be constrained by this project due to its small size and the open nature of the surrounding terrain.

- Since the project is an unmanned cell tower, with only monthly maintenance checks, impacts on wildlife movement in the project vicinity would be negligible.

Native Wildlife Nursery Sites

Wildlife nursery sites are those locations where native wildlife species bear and raise their young to a point where the young can become independent and disperse with their parents or on their own. Such locations in the general vicinity of the project site would include tall and dense grassland, native brush, woodlands, marshes, and streams.

- The proposed site does not support, nor is it expected to provide, habitats or conditions that would serve as a native wildlife nursery site. Its location on a ridge top with sparse and disturbed plant cover is not a good place for wildlife to bear and raise their young. Such conditions are more likely to be found on the lower terrain in the vicinity of the site, as well as in native shrublands on nearby terrain, in woodland vegetation along the drainage to the west. However, because of heavy grazing pressure, potential nursery sites outside of riparian habitats are limited. The project is expected to have no impact on native wildlife nursery sites because such sites do not occur in the project vicinity.

Cumulative Biological Impacts

Edge Effects

The site has been substantially disturbed by decades of grazing by livestock. Edge effects on the surrounding habitats are expected to be negligible because of this century-long practice. There is expected to be no increased predation by mesopredators such as skunks, opossums, and raccoons. These species currently occur in the area, and the population of these species is not expected to increase as a result of the project. Domestic cats would not be brought into the area, either during construction or during the monthly maintenance visits. There is expected to be no direct or indirect competition from exotic plant and animal species, because none would be introduced into the area as a result of implementation of the project. The project would not increase the frequency of fire in the vicinity. Environmental changes in temperature, light, and wind in the surrounding habitat are expected to be so miniscule as to defy detection. Construction and maintenance practices would prevent the discharge of pesticides or toxic materials.

Accessibility

The maintenance visits are planned for monthly only so as to keep human intrusion to a minimum.

Additive effect of direct and indirect impacts over time

The site is surrounded by sparse, overgrazed Riversidean Sage Scrub and Non-native Grassland that have been grazed for decades. Any direct and indirect impacts to the vegetation communities on and adjacent to the site would represent a very minor incremental increase in the disturbance, because of the prior extensive disturbance and the very small extent of the project. The restriction of site maintenance visits to once monthly following construction of the facility is designed to minimize impacts over time.

Fire Clearing Requirements

There are no fire clearing requirements because the project does not propose any stand-alone equipment cabinets on the site. All cellular cabinets and equipment would be enclosed in a structure that meets the requirements of item 3 of FP2 (Fire Code Compliance for cellular facilities). There would be no impacts from fire clearing activities.

Significance of Project Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

Vegetation Community/Habitat Impacts

Table 1 summarizes the impacts to the vegetation community from the proposed project (Figure 3). The proposed project site and its proposed access road alignment contain vegetation types and biological features or resources that would be impacted by implementation of the project. However, there are no jurisdictional wetlands or waterways that would be impacted by implementation of the project.

Table 1. Summary of Existing Vegetation Types and Potential Impacts within Project Footprint (Areas in Acres)

Vegetation Type	Impacted	Mitigation Ratio	Mitigation Required
Non-native Grassland	0	N. A.	N. A.
Riversidean Sage Scrub	0.37	2:1	0.74
Total	0.37	--	0.74

Non-Native Grassland

Implementation of the project would result in no impacts to Non-native Grassland.

Because the project consists of construction and operation of an unmanned communication facility, there would be little or no ongoing biological impacts resulting from operation of the facility. Additionally, no special status plants or wildlife (however, see nesting migratory birds, below), would be impacted within the Non-native Grassland habitats. Additionally, although the site is undoubtedly occasionally used by foraging raptors, the loss of the impact area would not substantially contribute to the loss of long term survival of any raptor species because of the small size of the impact area.

Riversidean Sage Scrub

The project would impact approximately 0.37 acre of Riversidean Sage Scrub by constructing the new alignment of the access road, and preparation of the antenna site. Sage scrub habitats are considered important for a number of plant and wildlife species, although the project site does not support any special status plants or animals. The ecological function of the Riversidean Sage Scrub on-site is similar to that of the surrounding Non-native Grassland because of the sparse overgrazed shrub cover and intergradation between the two vegetation types. The loss of 0.37 acre of Riversidean Sage Scrub caused by project implementation is considered significant under CEQA. The applicant proposes to mitigate this impact by procuring 0.74 acre of mitigation credit in the Daley Ranch Mitigation Bank, administered by the City of Escondido. The Daley Ranch Mitigation Bank includes a variety of sage scrub subtypes, varying from fairly dense to fairly open types; that would provide habitat for foraging raptorial birds and their prey, roughly equivalent to those found on the proposed project site, and providing a similar ecological function for a variety of wildlife.

BIOMIT 1: Riversidean Sage Scrub Impacts
The project should be conditioned to require, prior to any ground disturbance, the purchase of lands and/or credits for 0.74 acre of sage scrub habitat (2:1 mitigation ratio) in a County-approved mitigation bank.

Special Status Species

Plants

Engelmann Oaks and Scrub Oaks border the site and would be directly impacted by the proposed construction or resulting project. The project would be placed adjacent to the drip line of a single Engelmann Oak to the east and a single Scrub Oak to the west. One each additional Engelmann Oak and Scrub Oak would be about 30 feet from proposed improvements; if avoided during construction, these trees would not be impacted. Grading within 50 feet of the tree canopy has the potential to impact the roots of these trees. These impacts are not considered significant because of the prolonged and heavy grazing that has occurred in the project area, limiting the biological value of these isolated trees. However, a recommendation is made to reduce the likelihood of adverse effects. Grading in the vicinity of the oaks should occur with circumspection so that major (>1.5-inch diameter) roots are not randomly severed by such action. Rather, these should be deliberately cut at the limit of grading and the end of the cut root coated with a root sealant to prevent infection. The site contains no other special status plant species and project implementation would not impact any special status species.

Wildlife: Nesting Migratory Birds

If clearing or construction takes place during the spring/summer months (15 February through 31 August), nesting birds may be impacted by direct impacts to nesting sites or indirectly by noise, causing abandonment of nesting sites (for raptors, this period in the County is 15 January through 15 July). Nesting raptors and migratory birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and the California Fish and Game Code. This is considered a significant impact under CEQA unless reduced to a less-than-significant level by application of the recommended mitigation measure.

BIOMIT 2: Nesting Raptor and Other Migratory Birds
The project should be conditioned to restrict brushing, clearing, and grading during raptor and migratory bird breeding seasons (15 January through 31 August).

Other Wildlife Resources

Foraging Raptors: The loss of 2,379 square feet of potential raptor foraging area is considered less than significant because of the small size of the impact area.

Large Mammal Use: Although the site may occasionally be used by large mammals, it possesses no special habitat features that would be used for hunting or dening activities and therefore, the loss of 2,379 square feet of habitat is considered less than significant.

Local and Regional Wildlife Movement: The site has no special characteristics that would enable it to function as an important local or regional wildlife movement habitat; therefore, the project would result in less than significant effects on local and regional wildlife movement.

Native Wildlife Nursery Sites: The site has no special characteristics that would enable it to function as an important wildlife nursery site; therefore, the project would result in less than significant wildlife nursery site impacts.

Conclusion
Implementation of the proposed project would impact 0.37 acre of Riversidean Sage Scrub, impacts considered significant under CEQA. The project would be conditioned to acquire mitigation credits in a mitigation bank acceptable to the County of San Diego. Sage scrub habitat credits have been reserved in the Daley Ranch Mitigation Bank. The Daley Ranch Mitigation Bank contains a range of subtypes of sage scrub habitats, including sparse stands that would be the ecological equivalent of the habitat impacted by the proposed project because it would supply foraging habitat for raptorial birds. The project would avoid direct impacts to special status plants, but could impact nesting migratory birds protected by the migratory bird treaty act. These impacts to nesting migratory birds are considered significant under CEQA but would be mitigated to a less than significant level if the proposed mitigation measure is made a condition of project approval. The project is expected to have less than significant effects on foraging raptors, large mammals, local and regional wildlife movement, and native wildlife nursery sites for the reasons stated above.

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Preparer and Person/Organizations Contacted

Geoffrey L. Rogers, B. Sc., Biologist, Pacific Southwest Biological Services, Inc.
Michael U. Evans, M. Sc., Director of Operations, Pacific Southwest Biological Services, Inc.
Juan Castruita, Technical Production Manager, Pacific Southwest Biological Services, Inc.

Attachments

Appendix 1. Floral Checklist
Appendix 2. Faunal Checklist
Appendix 3. Sensitive Plants Reported from the Warner Springs quadrangle
Appendix 4. Sensitive Animals Reported from the Warner Springs quadrangle

Figure 1. Project Vicinity, Puerta La Cruz, Highway 79, Warner Springs, San Diego County, CA - ✪

N

Not to Scale

07-25-07 | Map Source: DeLorme® 3-D Topo Quads 2.0 | Pacific Southwest Biological Services, Inc.

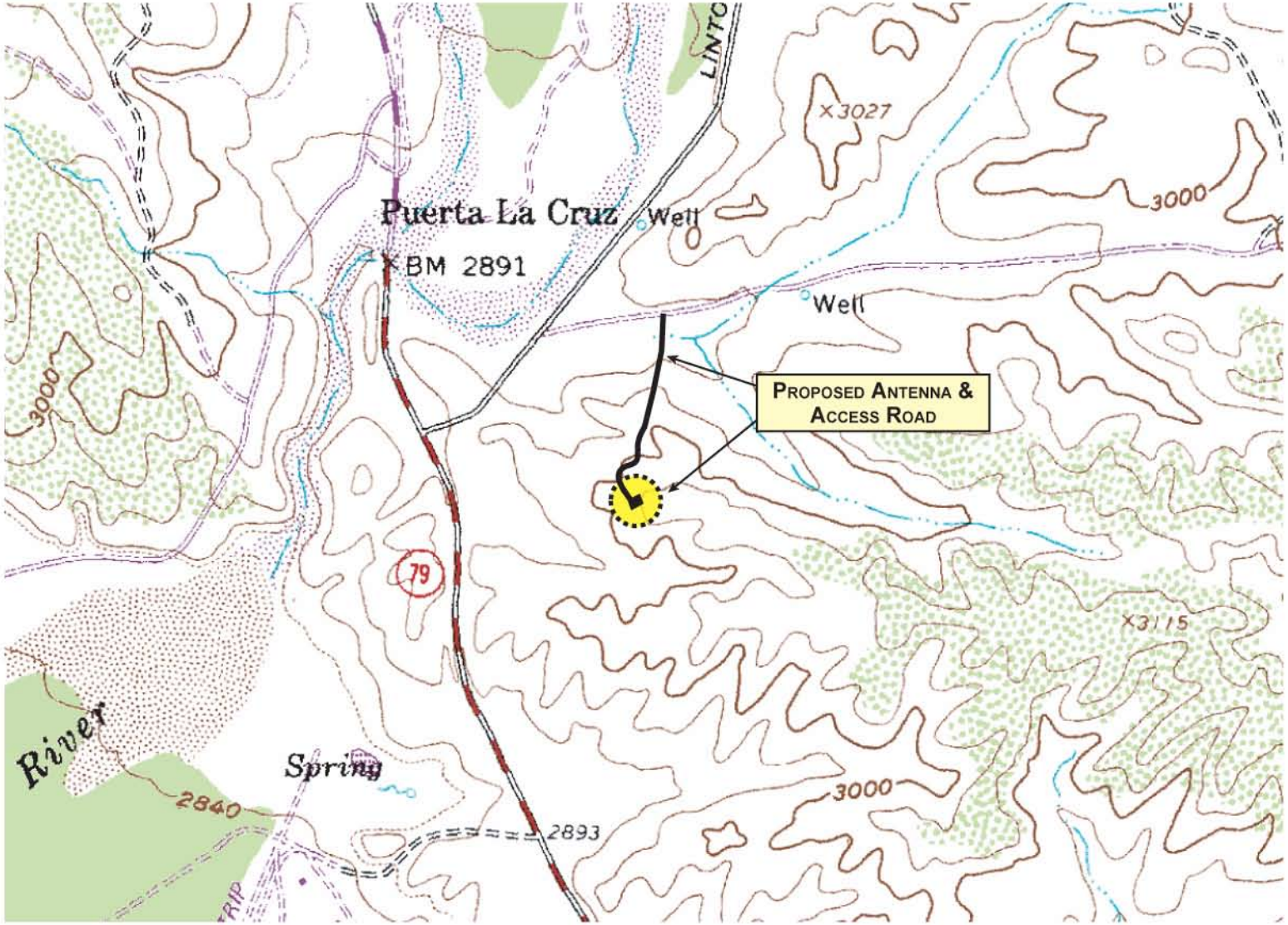

Figure 2. Project Location, Puerta La Cruz, Highway 79, Warner Springs, San Diego County
USGS 7.5' Warner Springs, CA Quadrangle

N

1" = 2,000'

Figure
3

NNG: NON-NATIVE GRASSLAND
RSS: RIVERSIDEAN SAGE SCRUB
QE: ENGELMANN'S OAK
QB: SCRUB OAK
– – – 100' FROM PROJECT LOCATION
———— ACCESS ROAD

RSS
RSS
EXCISTING ACCESS ROAD
NNG
RSS
RSS
NNG
RSS
PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD
ROAD TO BE ABANDONED
NNG
NNG
RSS
NNG
RSS
APN #136-160-41
RSS
(E) O/H ELECTRIC WIRES
(P) 12'-0" ACCESS ROAD
(P) 12'-0" ACCESS GATE
(P) 6'-0" UTILITY EASEMENT
QB
(E) TREES
QE
ELEVEL
(E) TREES
QE
QB
PROPOSED ANTENNA SITE
(P) 35'-0" x 61'-0" VISTA TOWERS LEASE AREA
(E) POWER POLE, (P) POWER SOURCE, TELCO M.P.O.E.
(E) O/H ELECTRIC WIRES
NNG
RSS
RSS
RSS
13.5° MAGNETIC NORTH
0' 5' 25' 50'
1" = 50.0'

FIGURE 3. VEGETATION RESOURCES ON PROPOSED ANTENNA SITE, PUERTA LA CRUZ, HIGHWAY 79, WARNER SPRINGS, APN 136-160-41

APPENDIX 1. FLORAL CHECKLIST OF SPECIES OBSERVED

DICOTYLEDONS

Adoxaceae – Adoxus Family
Sambucus mexicana C. Presley Blue Elderberry

Amaranthaceae - Amaranth Family
* *Salsola tragus* L. Prickly Russian-Thistle

Anacardiaceae - Sumac Family
Rhus ovata Wats. Sugar Bush

Asteraceae - Sunflower Family
Eriophyllum confertiflorum (DC.)Gray Golden Yarrow
Gutierrezia californica (DC.) Torr. & Gray Broom Matchweed
Heterotheca grandiflora Nuttall Telegraph Weed
* *Lactuca serriola* L. Prickly Lettuce
Corethrogyne [*Lessingia*] *filaginifolia* (Hook. & Arn.) Nutt. Sand-Aster
Stephanomeria sp. Wreathplant
Wyethia ovata Torrey & A. Gray Southern Mule's Ear

Boraginaceae – Borage Family
Cryptantha muricata var. *jonesii* (Gray)Jtn.

Brassicaceae - Mustard Family
* *Brassica nigra* (L.) Koch Black Mustard
* *Hirschfeldia incana* (L.) Lagr.-Fossat Short-pod Mustard

Cactaceae - Cactus Family
Cylindropuntia californica (Torrey & A. Gray) F.M. Knuth var. *parkeri* (J. Coult.) Cane Cholla
Opuntia phaecantha Engelm. Desert Prickly-Pear

Cucurbitaceae - Gourd Family
Cucurbita foetidissima Kunth Calabazilla

Euphorbiaceae - Spurge Family
Chamaesyce sp. Spurge
Croton [*Eremocarpus*] *setigerus* Hook. Dove Weed

Fagaceae - Oak Family
Quercus berberidifolia Liebm. Scrub Oak
Quercus engelmannii E. Greene Engelmann's Oak

Onagraceae – Evening-Primrose Family
Clarkia purpurea (Curtis) Nelson & Macbr. Wine Cup Clarkia

Orobanchaceae – Broom-Rape Family
Castilleja affinis Hook & Arn. Coast Paintbrush

Polygonaceae - Buckwheat Family
Eriogonum elongatum Benth. var. *elongatum* Tall Buckwheat
Eriogonum fasciculatum Benth. var. *polifolium* (DC.) Torr. & Gray Mountain California Buckwheat
Eriogonum gracile Benth. Slender Buckwheat
Eriogonum wrightii ssp *membranaceum* S. Stokes

APPENDIX 1. FLORAL CHECKLIST OF SPECIES OBSERVED (CONTINUED)

Rosaceae - Rose Family
Adenostoma sparsifolium Torrey Red Shank

MONOCOTYLEDONS

Poaceae - Grass Family
Aristida purpurea Nutt.
* *Avena* sp. Oat
* *Bromus diandrus* Brot.
* *Bromus hordaceus* L. Soft Chess
* *Bromus madritensis* L. ssp. *rubens* (L.) Husnot Red Brome
* *Bromus tectorum* L. Chear Grass
Nassella lepida (Hitchc.)Barkworth Foothill Needlegrass

* Denotes non-native plant taxa

APPENDIX 2. PUERTA LA CRUZ - FAUNAL CHECKLIST OF SPECIES OBSERVED

INVERTEBRATES

Acrididae (Typical Grasshoppers)
Grasshopper sp. — *Trimerotropis / Lacticia* sp.

Pieridae (White and Sulphurs)
Cabbage White — *Pieris rapae*

Formicidae (True Ants)
Harvester Ant — *Pogonomyrmex* sp.

Apidae (True Bees)
Carpenter Bee — *Xylocopa* sp.

Sphecidae (Thread-waisted Wasps)
Sand Wasp — *Bembix* sp.

BIRDS

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)
Western Kingbird — *Tyrannus verticalis*

Turdidae (\Thrushes)
Western Bluebird — *Sialia mexicanus*

Fringillidae (Finches)
House Finch — *Carpodacus mexicanus*

MAMMALS

Geomyidae (Pocket Gophers)
Botta's Pocket Gopher — *Thomomys bottae*

Canidae (Wolves and Foxes)
Coyote — *Canis latrans*

Appendix 3. Sensitive Plants reported from USGS 7.5' Warner Springs, California quadrangle (CNDDB)

Scientific Name and Common Name	Sensitivity Code & Status: Federal/State/Other	San Diego County Sensitive Species	Habitat Preference/Requirements	Potential to Occur on Site: Factual Basis for Determination
Arctostaphylos otayensis Otay Manzanita	None/None/1B (3-2-3)	List A	Chaparral, cismontane woodland/metavolcanic; 275-1700 m.	Low: Too far north of known range
Astragalus pachypus var. *jaegeri* Jaeger's Milk-vetch	None/None/1B (3-3-3)	List A	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, valley & foothill grassland/sandy or rocky. Known from/about 6 occurrences. Some habitat prob. lost during creation of Vail Lake. 365-915 m.	Low: Site is upland area without sandy drainages
Brodiaea orcuttii Orcutt's Brodiaea	FSC/None/1B (1-3-2)	List A	Vernal pools, valley & foothill grassland, closed-cone conif forest, cismontane woodland, chaparral, meadows, esp mesic, clay habitats, occ serpentine, in vernal pools & small drainages, 30-1615 m.	Low: Site lacks clayey soils that support this species
Deinandra mojavensis Mojave Tarplant	None/CE/1B (2-1-3)	List A	Chaparral (mesic), riparian scrub, 850-1600 m.	Low: Site lacks drainage channels that would support this species
Eriogonum foliosum Leafy Buckwheat	None/None/1B (3-2-2)	List A	Chaparral, lower montane conif forest, pinyon & juniper woodland/sandy, 1200-2200 m.	Low: Searched for and not found
Gilia caruifolia Caraway-leaved Gilia	None/None/4 (1-1-1) San Diego County?	List D	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, meadows; endemic to SD Co.; esp. in openings in chaparral or gravelly flats & slopes in thin oak woodland, 305-1500m	Low: Site lacks rocky or gravelly soils in forest habitat that supports this species
Grindelia hirsutula var. *halli* San Diego Gumplant	None/None/1B (2-2-3)	List A	Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, meadows & seeps, valley & foothill grassland, 185-1745 m.	Low: Site lacks clayey soils that support this species
Hulsea californica San Diego Sunflower	None/None/1B (2-1-3)	List A	Upper & lower montane coniferous forest, chaparral. Endemic to SD Co. Coarse to fine sandy loam in dist chaparral openings at high elev, 1000-2915 m.	Low: Site's grassland habitat does not support this species
Hulsea mexicana Mexican Hulsea	None/None/2 (3-1-1)	List B	Desert mountain areas near Jacumba	Low: Site is not within known range of species
Lessingia glandulifera var. *tomentosa* Lessingia	None/None/1B (2-1-3)	List B	Valleys near Warner Springs	Moderate: Present in the area but not observed on the site.
Linanthus bellus Desert Beauty	None/None/2 (2-1-1)	List B	Chaparral, esp dry slopes & flats; open sandy spots in chaparral, mostly in loamy coarse sandy DG soil types, 920-1400 m.	Low: Site's grassland habitat is out of the known range of this species
Linanthus orcuttii Orcutt's Linanthus	None/None/1B (2-1-2)	List A	Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, sometimes in disturbed areas, often in gravelly clearings, 1060-2000 m.	Low: Site is too low in elevation to support this taxon
Monardella macrantha ssp. *hallii* Hall's Monardella	None/None/1B (2-1-3)	List A	Broad-leaved upland forest, chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, valley & foothill grassland. Dry slopes & ridges in openings in habitat. 695-2195m.	Low: Site's grassland habitat does not support this species
Symphyotrichum defoliatum *San Bernardino Aster*	None/None/None	unlisted	Wet meadows, oak woodland, montane coniferous forest; above 1200 m.	Low: Incorrect habitat on-site. Also below recorded elevations for species

Appendix 4. Sensitive Animals reported from USGS 7.5' Warner Springs, California quadrangle (CNDDB)

Scientific Name and Common Name	Sensitivity Code & Status: Federal/State/Other	San Diego County Sensitive Species	Habitat Preference/Requirements	Potential to Occur on Site: Factual Basis for Determination
Warner Springs Shoulderband *Rotherix warnerfontis*	None/None/None	unlisted	In woodrat nests in Cañada Agua Caliente along south side of California State Highway 79, adjacent to golf course, about 1.6 km west of post office and fire station in Warner Springs. Known only from type locality and small population in a ravine near Lost Valley Spring, about 5 miles north of type locality. Inhabits abandoned wood rat nests at type locality, and fallen logs and leaf mold of Quercus agrifolia at Lost Valley Spring site. Reeder and Miller state that the species was widely and abundantly scattered in wood rat nests along Cañada Agua Caliente in 1957 and 1972.	Low: no woodrat nests detected and no Coast Live Oak on-site. Site is over a mile north of Agua Caliente Cr. and several miles from Lost Valley.
Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus*	None/None/None	Group 2	Winter roost sites extend along coast from N. Mendocino to Baja Calif.; roosts located in wind-protected tree groves (eucalyptus, Monterey Pine, Cypress), with nectar and water source nearby.	Low: no wind-protected groves onsite and no nectar and water sources nearby.
Arroyo Chub *Gila orcutti*	FSC/None/CSC	Group 1	LA Basin south coastal streams, esp slow water sections w/mud or sand bottoms.	Low: no surface water onsite.
Arroyo Toad *Bufo californicus*	FE/None/CSC	Group 1	Semi-arid regions near washes or intermittent streams, incl. valley-foothill & desert riparian, desert wash, etc., esp rivers w/sandy banks, willows, cottonwoods, sycamores w/loose, gravelly areas.	Low: no intermittent streams onsite.
San Diego Horned Lizard *Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillii*	FSC/None/CSC	Group 2	Coastal sage scrub, chaparral in arid and semi-arid climate, esp. friable, rocky, or shallow sandy soils.	Moderate: vegetation and soil on south side of site suitable. Ant colonies not noted.
Belding's Orange-throated Whiptail *Aspidoscelis* [*Cnemidophorus*] *hyperythrus beldingi*	FSC/None/CSC	Group 2	Coastal scrub (low elev.), chaparral, valley & foothill hardwood, esp washes & sandy areas w/patches of brush & rocks.	Moderate: vegetation and soil on south side of site possibly suitable but plant cover is sparse.
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* (breeding)	None/None/None	Group 1	Carrion feeder, forages over roads, fields, open forests, & other open habitats.	Moderate: may forage in area but site has no nesting habitat. San Luis Rey R. valley above L. Henshaw concentrates thermal uplift and provides ideal soaring conditions for sp. to search for carrion.
Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperi*	None/None/CSC	Group 1	Woodland, usu. open, interrupted or marginal type, nests mainly in riparian areas	Low: open nature of habitat and lack of wooded area decreases probability.

Appendix 4. Sensitive Animals reported from USGS 7.5' Warner Springs, California quadrangle (CNDDB)

Scientific Name and Common Name	Sensitivity Code & Status: Federal/State/Other	San Diego County Sensitive Species	Habitat Preference/Requirements	Potential to Occur on Site: Factual Basis for Determination
Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*	None/None/CSC, CFP	Group 1	Foothills, mountains grasslands, deserts, and shrub habitats.	Moderate: may forage in area but site has no nesting habitat. San Luis Rey R. valley above L. Henshaw concentrates thermal uplift and provides ideal soaring conditions for raptors. Grasslands around site host many prey spp.
Prairie Falcon *Falco mexicanus* (nesting)	None/None/CSC	Group 2	Dry, open terrain, level or hilly, breeding sites on cliffs	Moderate: may forage in area but site has no nesting habitat. San Luis Rey R. valley above L. Henshaw concentrates thermal uplift and provides ideal soaring conditions for raptors. Grasslands around site host many prey spp.
California Gull *Larus californicus*	None/None/CSC	Group 2	(Nesting colony) Does not breed locally. Forages on beaches and mudflats. Generally a transient through so. CA. with highest numbers occurring in winter although numbers increase at Salton Sea summer through winter.	Low: not in region at time of assessment and would not occur onsite; however, would occur in winter at Lake Henshaw.
Common Barn Owl *Tyto alba pratincola*	None/None/None	Group 2	Uncommon but very widespread resident, occurring in agricultural and residential areas, grassland, riparian and oak woodland and in broken chaparral near sandstone bluffs (Unitt 2004) in San Diego County.	Moderate: may forage in area but site has no nesting habitat. Historic nesting in road cut along Hwy. 79 several miles to south. Grasslands around site host many prey spp.
Burrowing Owl *Athene [Speotyto] cunicularia* (burrow sites)	FSC/None/CSC	Group 1	Open dry annual or perennial grasslands, desert & scrublands w/low growing vegetation, uses ground squirrel burrows for nesting.	Moderate: species has nested in very low numbers historically in grasslands several miles to south. California Ground Squirrel (Spermophilus beecheyi) not presently noted but old holes can be maintained by owls. Botta's Pocket Gopher (Thomomys bottae) burrows noted onsite would not be usable by Burrowing Owl.
Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*	FSC/None/CSC	Group 1	Open habitats with scattered shrubs & other perches.	Low to Moderate: may occur in area and may nest in trees onsite. Sp. is in apparent decline across entire range.
California Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris actia*	None/None/CSC	Group 2	Barren ground with short grass or scattered bushes.	Low to Moderate: may forage and nest in area.
Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*	None/None/None	Group 2	Small groups in fields or open woodlands, often perched on wires or fences.	Present. Two prominent oaks onsite could be used for nesting if cavities are present.

Appendix 4. Sensitive Animals reported from USGS 7.5' Warner Springs, California quadrangle (CNDDB)

Scientific Name and Common Name	Sensitivity Code & Status: Federal/State/Other	San Diego County Sensitive Species	Habitat Preference/Requirements	Potential to Occur on Site: Factual Basis for Determination
Grasshopper Sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*	None/None/CSC	Group 1	Dense grassland w/tall forbs & scattered shrubs for singing perches.	Low: continual livestock grazing has kept grass to short to provide habitat for sp.
Tricolored Blackbird *Agelaius tricolor* (colony)	FSC/None/CSC	Group 1	Breeds near fresh water in emergent wetlands w/dense cattails or tules. Feeds in grassland & cropland.	Low to Moderate: species may occasionally forage in surrounding grasslands. No nesting habitat onsite.
Yuma Myotis *yumanensis*	FSC/None/CSC	Group 2	Open forest & woodlands. Closely tied to bodies of water.	Low: site has inadequate habitat and no water.
Townsend's Big-eared Bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*	FSC/None/CSC	Group 2	Day roosts include caves & mines, but may be found in buildings. Distribution not well known. Prefers mesic habitats.	Low: site has inadequate habitat for foraging and roosting.
Pallid Bat *Antrozous pallidus*	None/None/CSC	Group 2	Caves, tunnels, attics, crevices, variety of other locations. Grassland, shrublands, woodlands, forests, most common in open dry habitats with rocky areas.	Low to Moderate: may occasionally forage over site but would roost elsewhere.
Western Mastiff Bat *Eumops perotis californicus*	FSC/None/CSC	Group 2	Small colonies in rocky cliffs or crevices. Variety of open habitats including woodlands, coastal sage scrub, grasslands, chaparral, desert scrub, and urban.	Low to Moderate: may occasionally forage over site but would roost elsewhere.
San Diego Black-tailed Jackrabbit *Lepus californicus bennettii*	FSC/None/CSC	Group 2	Variety of habitats including coastal sage scrub, chaparral, & desert scrub.	Moderate to high; likely occurs in area.
Northwestern San Diego Pocket Mouse *Chaetodipus fallax*	None/None/CSC	Group 2	Coastal scrub, chaparral, grasslands, sagebrush, etc. in southwestern CA, esp. sandy, herbaceous areas w/rocks or coarse gravel.	Low to Moderate: may occur in area.
Dulzura (California) Pocket Mouse *Chaetodipus californicus femoralis*	FSC/None/CSC	Group 2	Variety of habitats incl coastal scrub, chaparral, sagebrush, & grassland. Attracted to grassland-chaparral edges.	Low to moderate: site is at east edge of historic range.
Stephens' Kangaroo Rat *Dipodomys stephensi*	FE/CT/None	Group 1	Annual & perennial grasslands, also coastal scrub, sagebrush, esp w/buckwheat, chamise, brome grass & filaree.	Moderate to high: large population has been documented over broad area of San Luis Rey R. valley above L. Henshaw.
American Badger *Taxidea taxus*	None/None/None	Group 2	Uncommon resident throughout the state. Abundant in drier open shrub, forest, & herbaceous habitats with friable soils.	Moderate: likely occurs in area. Soils in area are conducive to burrowing but no large burrows detected.
Southern Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus*	None/None/Game Species	Group 2	Common to abundant w/ wide distribution throughout state. Prefers mosaic of various-aged vegetation habitats; brushy areas & tree thickets important for escape cover.	Low: due largely to livestock grazing. Site lacks brushy cover and foraging opportunities.

DEFINITIONS OF SENSITIVITY RATINGS

California Native Plant Society (CNPS)

List Status

List 1A	Plants presumed extinct in California. CEQA consideration mandatory
List 1B	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere. CEQA consideration mandatory
List 2	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere. CEQA consideration mandatory
List 3	Plants about which we need more information - a review list. CEQA consideration strongly recommended
List 4	Plants of limited distribution - a watch list. CEQA consideration strongly recommended

CNPS R-E-D Code

R (Rarity)	
1	Rare, but found in sufficient numbers and distributed widely enough that the potential for extinction is low at this time
2	Distributed in a limited number of occurrences, occasionally more if each occurrence is small
3	Distributed in one to several highly restricted occurrences, or present in such small numbers that it is seldom reported
E (Endangerment)	
1	Not endangered
2	Endangered in a portion of its range
3	Endangered throughout its range
D (Distribution)	
1	More or less widespread outside California
2	Rare outside California
3	Endemic to California

State-Listed/Designated Plants and Animals

CE	State-listed, endangered
CT	State-listed, threatened
CR	State-listed, rare
CC	Candidate for State listing
CSC	California Special Concern Species (Department of Fish and Game)
CFP	California Fully Protected

Federally-Listed/Designated Plants and Animals

FE	Federally-listed, endangered
FT	Federally-listed, threatened
PE	Federally-proposed, endangered
PT	Federally-proposed, threatened
FC	Candidate for Federal listing
FSC	Federal Special Concern Species
C2*	Threat and/or distribution data are insufficient to support federal listing, but the plant is presumed extinct
C3c	Too widespread and/or not threatened
USFWS 2002 List	U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service Birds of Conservation Concern 2002 List within jurisdiction of Carlsbad FWO "…to identify species, subspecies, and populations of migratory and non-migratory birds in need of additional conservation actions."

National Audubon Society WatchList

Red List	Identified by BirdLife International as Threatened or Near-threatened at the global level and by Partners in Flight as Extremely High Priority at the national level
Yellow List	Identified by Partners in Flight at the national level as of Moderately High Priority or Moderate Priority

PUERTA LA CRUZ
SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo #1. View of site from highway (North).

Photo #2. View of site from highway (South).

Puerta La Cruz
Site Photographs

Photo #3. Powerline access road, looking South.

Photo #4. Existing access road ascending the steep North slope of project ridge, looking South.

PUERTA LA CRUZ
SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo #5. Vehicles tracks on slope, proposed new access road onto Northwest side ridge to project site, looking Southwest.

Photo #6. Proposed new access road on Northeast side ridge, looking Southeast to Scrub Oak.

Puerta La Cruz
Site Photographs

Photo #7. Project site, looking East.

Photo #8. Project site foreground, looking West.